

in error, for the students of adaptation had already produced brilliant results by the appeal to experiment, as the work of Weismann and Poulton alone abundantly proves. Moreover, to conclude, as Mr. Lock does, that "by such methods alone" [*i.e.*, the exclusive study of variation and inheritance] "can any real progress in our knowledge of the processes of evolution be brought about," is to indulge in that controversial habit, and to encourage that narrow restriction of study which in his previous sentence he so creditably, if mistakenly, deploras.

How obvious it is that if there is the least ground—as even Mr. Lock admits—for the belief that the struggle for existence plays any part in the drama of evolution, then the patient investigation of the intricate relations between organism and environment at every stage in its life-history must form an indispensable part of the study of evolution.

WALTER GARSTANG.

The Cult of the Unfit, by E. B. Iwan-Müller; *Darwinism and Politics*, by Sidney Low. (*Fortnightly Review*, August and September, 1909.)

AMONGST the many indications that the betterment of the human race largely attracts public attention is the space that is given to it in the leading periodicals of the day. This, no doubt, is partly due to the fact that the scientific world has recently been celebrating the centenary of Darwin's birth and the jubilee of the publication of *The Origin of Species*. But it is also to be accounted for by the spread of the knowledge of biological phenomena among the educated classes of most civilised nations. The extent of the ground travelled over during the last half century may (as Mr. Iwan-Müller reminds us) be gauged by a passage in Disraeli's address to the Oxford Diocesan Society some five years after the appearance of Darwin's famous work. "I hold," said this master of language in his grand oratorical manner, "that the highest science is the interpretation of nature, the interpretation of the highest nature, the highest science [note here the play on words]. What is the highest nature? Man is the highest nature. But I must say that when I compare the interpretations of the highest nature of the most advanced, the most fashionable, of modern schools of modern science—when I compare that with other teachings with which we are familiar—I am not prepared to say that the lecture room is more scientific than the Church. What is the question which is now placed before society with a glib assurance which to me is most astounding? That question is this: Is a man an ape or an angel? My Lord [turning to Bishop Wilberforce who was in the chair], *I am on the side of the angels*. I repudiate with indignation and abhorrence these new-fangled theories. I believe they are foreign to the conscience of humanity [note this fine generalisation], and I say more—that even from the most intellectual point of view, I believe the severest metaphysical [?] analysis is opposed to such conclusions."

Well, in spite of this dramatic invective, which we can remember made a great sensation at the time, the "fallen-angel theory" is now discredited even by dignitaries of the Church, as any one may discover by the mere perusal of the pages of this REVIEW. It does not, however, follow that the "ape-theory" has taken its place. All we know with certainty is that man has evolved somehow in the past, that he is not a "special creation," and that he has, if he uses his judgment aright, a noble future before him. The pressing question of to-day is not, Is evolution true? but how can it best be made subservient to the needs of modern society? It is one thing to hold the laws of Natural Selection and its corollary the Survival of the Fittest to be true; it is quite another thing to apply these laws to the problems of modern society.

Both the able articles which are coupled together above discuss the limits of this applicability, but from somewhat different points of view. Mr. Iwan-Müller maintains that "the struggle for life, with all its attendant conse-

quences of inequality and poverty, is the mainspring of civilisation—that this struggle is not only the cause but the condition of progress and that without it the clock stops.” He is all in favour of competition as the necessary stimulus to exertion, and seems to affirm that the strongest man will, and *ought to*, win. Accordingly he attacks the new Trades-Unionism for aiming at the establishment of mediocrity by the elimination of competition. “To demand,” he says, “the legislative restriction of the hours devoted to labour is to deny to the individual of superior physical or mental endowment the opportunity of profiting by his superiority.” This levelling-up movement he calls “The Cult of the Unfit,” since it seeks to place the Unfit on a level with the Fit.

Mr. Sidney Low, in his answering article, combats this position with his usual lucidity, but we are not sure that he does so quite fairly. He classes Mr. Iwan-Müller with Nietzsche, and says “he leaves no place for mercy, generosity, kindliness,” or any kindred quality. He points out that this is not Darwinism, as understood by Darwin himself, who in the *Descent of Man* dwelt on the great value of the social instincts and by his theory of Sexual Selection made the evolution of type depend increasingly upon preferences and judgments which qualify what seems hard and brutal in the theory of Natural Selection. Mr. Iwan-Müller, however, expressly says that it is the duty of the State “to make provision for life’s actual failures, just as it is the business of the organisers of armies to provide not only for those who actually succumb upon the stricken field, but also for the sick and for those that fall out by the way.” Surely Mr. Low must have misjudged this passage.

No, we are satisfied that these two writers are not so far apart as one of them would have us believe. Mr. Low for his part insists on the improvement of racial fitness by the improvement of environment, and Mr. Iwan-Müller does much the same thing when he declares that “to man alone it is given so to modify his environment as to alter for good or evil the operation of the laws that govern organic life.” The difference between the two comes pretty nearly to this—that the one lays greater emphasis on Nature, the other greater emphasis on Nurture. Mr. Iwan-Müller is, as we conceive, quite right when he says that the “tale of achievement is the result of a struggle.” Witness the struggle of the pioneers of aviation and their personal and patriotic rivalry, which inspires their courage and inventive skill. And Mr. Low is also quite right when he observes that the struggle is not always or exclusively against adverse physical conditions. It also has a moral side. There is a struggle always going on against human indolence and cowardice, against human weaknesses of all sorts. But here, too, the victory awaits the strongest will, so that the “exception proves the rule.”

No reasonable person, certainly no Eugenist, supposes that Individualism pure and simple, or State supervision pure and simple, will advance the progress of humanity. What is needed is a wise combination of both. Officialism, within limits, is indispensable, but it would indeed be a dreary world were love and charity excluded from it. And it would be a decaying and degenerating world if we were not spurred on to action by our personal needs—physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual—or if, like young birds in their nest, we had only to open our mouths and wait for the State to fill them.

Marriage and Disease. Edited by PROF. H. SENATOR and DR. S. KAMINER.
Translated from the German by J. DULBERG, M.D., J.P. Second
Impression. London: Rebman, Limited. 1908.

THIS book is abridged from the larger volume which was published a few years ago as a text-book for the medical profession, and it consists of twenty-seven chapters, each of which is written by an expert of recognised authority. The first four chapters deal with marriage chiefly from its social aspects, and include exceedingly interesting and useful accounts of the hygienic